



WOKING JOINT COMMITTEE

DATE: 2 DECEMBER 2015
SUBJECT: WRITTEN MEMBER QUESTIONS
DIVISION: WOKING

1. Question from Mr Will Forster, Surrey County Council

I understand that Surrey County Council is working with a company called Ethos to establish detailed information about how people park in Guildford. Guildford is a very popular destination and experiences traffic congestion at busy times, this study will be used to change people's parking habits to reduce road and parking congestion and carbon emissions.

Woking's situation is very similar to Guildford's, therefore please will the Woking Joint Committee agree to work with Ethos to research people's parking habits in Woking and produce a plan to reduce congestion and the other negatives associated with parking?

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:

This is a Guildford Borough Council led project. It could be considered but it is unlikely that ETHOS would be able to do this for Woking in the immediacy. The reason is that ETHOS are being funded by central Government and the Guildford project is a pilot. When the pilots are completed, ETHOS might be able to undertake a study in Woking, but the scope would need to be agreed and we'd also need to establish what it will cost us. In particular, if we are committing funds to this, we need to identify what the problem is we are trying to resolve, and also ascertain whether there are any other ways of achieving the same outcome.

2. Question from Mr Will Forster, Surrey County Council

I understand that the Guildford Local Committee recently undertook a Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) review of the Shere area. As HGV movements are a serious concern amongst local residents in Sutton Green in my division, please will the Woking Joint Committee agree to undertake a similar review to Guildford and review HGV movements in Sutton Green, or Mayford and Sutton, or possibly even all of rural Woking Borough?

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:

The HGV study encompasses a wide rural area south of Shere, mainly within the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). In order to better determine the origins and destinations of HGV movements the study area has been extended to the A25 to the north, the A281 to the west and the A29 to the east, which affects some parishes within the Mole Valley and Waverley district areas.

The study will require a review of directional signing and street furniture. As it is being carried out throughout much of the same area where the Surrey Hills de-cluttering working group project to review and rationalise redundant road signs and street furniture is active, it was decided to combine work on both projects.

A third strand of this work is to trial the risk assessment approach developed by Norfolk County Council within their rural decluttering project which has led to the removal of many redundant road signs leading to significant financial savings.

The methodology being developed within the Shere area HGV study is being trialled with a view to possibly embedding the approach into Surrey County Council signing policy. It is recommended that further studies do not take place until after the current study is reviewed in the summer/autumn of 2016.

3. Question from Mr Will Forster, Surrey County Council

Please can the Woking Joint Committee explain why there are fewer buses on Number 34 bus in between 8 am and 9 am, Monday to Friday, and the Number 35 bus has no service in between 8 am and 9 am, Monday to Friday?

I assume this reduction in service is not linked to buses being used for school transport, as there is no similar reduction in service when children leave school. Please can the Joint Committee explain why there is a worse bus service when residents want to travel to work?

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:

Bus services 34/35 through Woking are operated up to 7pm on weekdays by Arriva on a primarily commercial basis. The number of journeys operated at peak times is governed by relative actual demand for access to various points along the whole route between Guildford and Camberley and also by what each bus can physically achieve. Arriva point out that recent timetable changes have been required to cope with increasing traffic congestion. In order to achieve the best possible service reliability within the resources that can be deployed, they have had to give buses extra time to complete their journeys, particularly during the morning peak period. This reduces the amount of journeys that can be operated. Analysis of predominant overall passenger flows and demand has led them to reduce service 35 slightly, in favour of increasing resources on certain parts of route 34, which is said by them to be more popular. However, service 35 into Woking, is supplemented by service 81 from the Barnsbury area. In the current financial climate, against the background of the ongoing Local Transport Review, it is unlikely that the County Council would be able to pay Arriva or another operator to run more service 34/35 journeys during the morning peak period.

4. Question from Councillor Paul Smith, Woking Borough Council

A number of residents have told me of their concern about road safety within the Borough. In order to address their concerns, please could the Chairman explain how the County Council, Borough Council and Surrey Police work together to coordinate action around this issue at a borough level and what the best way is for members of the public to find out about what is being done by all partners locally?

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:

We are aware that many residents have concerns about road safety and we work closely with Surrey Police and colleagues in our Safety Engineering Team in order to alleviate these concerns. The best way for residents to find out what is happening locally is for them to submit an enquiry via Surrey Highways.

Surrey County Council work closely with Surrey Police and Woking Borough Council via a number of working groups and forums to deal with road safety issues.

Vehicle speeds can be a particular concern and our Speed Management Plan lists those road where speed has been raised as a concern. Surrey Police will endeavour to monitor all of the roads on this list and in some cases, the concerns about speeding turn out to be a perception of speeding. However, where there recorded speeds are high, the police will aim to undertake enforcement or temporarily deploy Vehicle Activated Signs. Multi-agency discussions about the Speed Management Plan may lead to the development of an engineering scheme, particularly if there is a history of personal injury collisions.

The collision history of a road will also be discussed at the meetings of the Road Safety Working Group if a location is flagged up due to there being a cluster of injury collisions either at a single location or along a length of road. Any fatal collisions that may have occurred will also be discussed at these meetings but the details of the collisions that are discussed may be sensitive or the incidents may be subject to ongoing investigation or prosecution, for which reason the minutes of these meetings are not made public.

Other work with Surrey Police includes School Speed Watch events outside of, or close to, schools and Roadside Education and Enforcement Days, where things such as mobile phone use, lack of seat belts are targeted amongst other things, as well as speeding.

There is less Borough Council involvement simply because SCC is the Highway Authority but that does not mean that Woking Borough Council officers are never involved, as there may be matters that are within the Borough Council's remit and which can improve road safety and in these instances the Borough Council's help can be invaluable. If the Road Safety Working Group meetings bring to light a problem within Woking town centre, WBC officers will be involved due to the maintenance agreement that exists between SCC and WBC with regard to that area. Woking Borough Council enforces waiting restrictions on behalf of Surrey County Council and this can have a positive effect on road safety.

5. Question from Councillor John Kingsbury, Woking Borough Council

Would the Chairman please advise me when resurfacing will take place on Church Road St Johns, which is in a bad condition and is included, as far as I am aware, in the Operation Horizon contract?

When will Members receive an updated report setting out the latest timetable for Operation Horizon going forward?

Answer from Chairman on behalf of the committee:

In the Horizon programme report presented to Members in June of this year, resurfacing of Church Road, St Johns, was scheduled for Years 4/5 of the project. The Horizon team are presently undertaking assessments of all remaining sites and refining the programme on a priority basis. Although this work is not yet concluded, Church Road is scheduled to be resurfaced in the coming financial year (Year 4) from April onwards. Programme dates are not yet available, but it is anticipated that a revised Horizon report will be issued when the assessments and setting of programme dates have been concluded.